



California High-Speed Rail Authority Seeks New Federal Funds

Local Leaders Support \$16.6 Million Bid For Planning

SACRAMENTO – With strong support from local officials, the California High-Speed Rail Authority has submitted three planning grant applications that could provide as much as \$16.6 million in additional federal funding for the state's high-speed train project.

The funds would pay for service development plans that would help keep the preparation of draft environmental documents and preliminary engineering documents on schedule in the Los Angeles to San Diego and Merced to Sacramento sections of the high-speed rail project and on the Altamont Corridor Rail Project. In addition, the Authority is also supporting the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in its effort to apply for rail plan grants.

"California's high-speed train project is the biggest public infrastructure project in the nation," said Authority Chairman Curt Pringle. "We're already leading the pack in federal funding for high-speed rail, and we're committed to fighting to bring every federal dollar possible to California. These new applications show we're continuing to work hard to win additional support and keep high-speed rail on track."

The applications will go to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), which has \$115 million available for planning and construction funds for high-speed intercity passenger rail under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act approved in 2008. Up to \$50 million will be awarded in this round of funding.

The cities of Sacramento, Riverside, San Bernardino, Pomona, Ontario, El Monte, West Covina and Murrieta all expressed support for the Authority's effort to garner federal funds to improve transportation alternatives in their regions, provide much-needed jobs and many other benefits.

"The high-speed train's economic development and environmental benefits are significant and we want to bring it to Sacramento as soon as possible," said Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson. "I am strongly supportive of the High-Speed Rail Authority's current effort to secure additional federal funding that will help us move the project forward more quickly."

In addition, the effort has the support of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, which operates the Altamont Commuter Express and is the Authority's partner in the Altamont Corridor Rail Project.

"The Rail Commission strongly supports the Authority's request for federal high-speed and regional rail planning grant funds, and has pledged matching funds in the current MOU. We look forward to supporting your efforts at the federal level in any way we can," wrote Stacey Mortensen, Executive Director of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.

Also supporting the Authority's application for funding are Southern California Association of Governments, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Riverside County Transportation Commission, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority and the San Diego Association of Governments, who are working together as the Southern California High-Speed Rail

Inland Corridor Group.

"The City of Riverside is supportive of California's efforts to provide a state of the art passenger rail system to Southern California, specifically to Riverside via the Los Angeles to San Diego corridor," wrote Riverside Mayor Ronald O. Loveridge. "By 2030, more than 22 million will reside along this corridor, with the Inland Empire in particular anticipated to be one of the fastest growing areas of the nation in the coming decades."

"The City of Ontario wishes to express support for the state's pending PRIIA planning grant application for our high-speed train section," wrote Paul S. Leon, Mayor of Ontario, in a letter to the Authority. "Working cooperatively for a number of years with the Authority, we are supportive of the state's efforts to provide a state-of-the-art passenger rail system to Southern California, and specifically, to Ontario via Inland Empire Corridor. High-speed trains will operate along our 160-mile alignment...and connect the state's largest and second largest cities..."

"We see service in this corridor (Los Angeles to San Diego, via Inland Empire Corridor) as an important transportation component to increase mobility, provide intermodal connections including air-rail, decrease congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, and serve as a catalyst for smart-growth development at stations," wrote Pomona Mayor Elliott Rothman, in a letter of support. "...These and related regional corridor connections... will provide a vital link for all of Southern California to our region which includes major workforce, industrial, and commercial resources..."

"Our city has continuously supported California's efforts to provide a state-of-the-art passenger rail system that would benefit the most populous state in the nation," Murrieta Mayor Kelly Bennett wrote. "...we wholeheartedly support your grant application that would allow the Authority to make further progress with the design of the Los Angeles to San Diego section."

Earlier this year, California received approval of \$2.37 billion in federal funding, including \$2.25 billion for planning and construction of the initial phase of the high-speed rail project, which will run 520 miles between Los Angeles and San Francisco, via the Central Valley.

The applications submitted this week would cover service development plans to be completed within the next two years on later-stage portions of the project, which would complete the 800-mile network across the state and also incorporate the Altamont Rail Corridor Project. The PRIIA funds are expected to be awarded later this summer.

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